

Written testimony of
Lorin Liesenfelt
President

DOG DAYS ADOPTION EVENTS, INC.
101 North Main Street, Essex, CT 06426
860-767-6840
lorin@godogdays.org

TESTIMONY BEFORE THE ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE

Wednesday, March 7, 2012 at 10:30 A.M. in Room 2B
CT General Assembly

Reference: S.B. No. 253 An Act Concerning Revisions to the Animal Importation Statutes.

Senator Myer and Representative Roy and other members of your committee, my name is Lorin Liesenfelt, President of Dog Days Adoption Events, Inc., a Non Profit Organization based in Essex, CT. I am here today to express my support of **S.B. No. 253 An Act Concerning Revisions to the Animal Importation Statutes.**

My organization's mission is to assist small rescue centers and municipal shelters in Connecticut and other states, to find homes for their dogs by organizing community dog adoption events. We have been supported by over 500 volunteers and because of them, have successfully managed five events in our first year of existence. During this time, we have also developed a good working relationship with the Connecticut Department of Agriculture; state rescue centers, municipal pounds and Animal Control Officers.

We encourage you to vote in favor of this bill. Initial vetting requirements as they now exist, created unnecessary hardships for responsible rescues centers. Our concerns are as follows;

(1) Existing Laws Already Mandate Responsible Vetting

Legitimate and responsible rescue organizations that bring animals into this state are required by existing law to have their animals seen by a veterinarian no more than two weeks before the animals are transported into Connecticut. ¹

Most USDA transporters also require a two week quarantine period before transport which ensures the animal is healthy and will not “break” with an illness during transport. This quarantine period may cost upwards of \$20 per day to quarantine an animal in preparation for transport. ²

(2) Responsible Rescues Who Comply and Exceed the Law Can’t Continue

Paying for the vetting, boarding/quarantine and transport costs of a dog scheduled to be put to sleep is expensive and time consuming but good rescues do it daily. Requiring additional vetting once the animal reaches Connecticut punishes those who are behaving responsibly and within the confines of the law. Many rescue centers have and will close due to the increased costs.

(3) A Potential to Bring in More Disease

If rescues decide to do the minimum vetting required while the animal is out of state then the potential increases for MORE diseased animals to come into the state as quarantine or other health testing may not be considered in order to save on overall costs.

The additional vetting requirements presuppose rescues will not comply with out of state vetting requirements and undermine the professionals in the veterinary community in other states by not accepting their legal document of stated health.

Rescue centers that circumvent USDA, USDOT and state requirements will be in non-compliance with existing law and subject to punishment. Our existing laws are designed to protect the health of animals coming into our state. Adding additional vetting requirements for animals coming in legally and humanely are disingenuous without sufficient statistical basis.

Thank you for your time and attention in this matter and for the opportunity to address you today.

¹ IMPORT REQUIREMENTS: CONNECTICUT

http://www.aphis.usda.gov/import_export/animals/animal_import/downloads/ct.html

Any dog or cat imported into this state shall be accompanied by a certificate of health issued no more than 30 days prior to entry by a licensed veterinarian and approved by the proper livestock sanitary official of the state of its origin, stating that such dog or cat is free from clinical signs of any infectious, contagious or communicable disease, that such dog or cat is not from an area under quarantine for rabies. Any such dog or cat over 3 months of age must have proof of current rabies vaccination given by a veterinarian prior to the date of importation and not have been exposed to rabies within the past 100 days. A copy of such health certificate shall be forwarded promptly to the commissioner. Any person may import, from another state any licensed dog with collar and tag, and keep the same in this state for not more than thirty days without complying with the provision of section 22-337 or 22-338. No person firm or corporation shall import or export for the purposes of sale or offering for sale any dog under the age of eight weeks unless such dog is transported with its dam and no person firm or corporation shall sell within the state any dog or cat under the age of eight weeks. Any person firm or corporation violating the provisions of this section or

bring in any dog into this state from an area under quarantine for rabies shall be fined not more than \$100.00 or imprisoned not more than 30 days or both.

² SAMPLE OF TRANSPORT REQUIREMENTS FROM PETS, LLC:

<http://www.petsllc.net/requirements.php>

P.E.T.S. LLC reserves the right at anytime to refuse to transport a dog/puppy for any reason.

Keep in mind that this is a very long transport for the animals and they have already gone through so much change in their lives. The guidelines below are all preventative measures to help ensure the dog or puppy is healthy before, during and after transport. However, since most of the health backgrounds of the animals are unknown, stress from the transport, change in climate, change in food, etc. may still bring out a cold or kennel cough once they arrive up north. Just like people, some animals are more sensitive to change and more susceptible to come down with something. Please be patient with your new family member during the first few days.

INTERSTATE HEALTH CERTIFICATE

Please attach the HC to the outside of the paperwork envelope via tape, paperclip or staple.

Every dog or puppy that boards our transport MUST have an interstate Health Certificate. A print out of the dog's shot record from your vet is NOT an interstate Health Certificate....if your vet says it is, please call Kyle at 615-218-1589 immediately. All health certificates, regardless of each state's requirements, are only good for 10 days from delivery, as required by the USDA.

http://www.aphis.usda.gov/animal_welfare/downloads/manuals/dealer/healthcert.pdf

Click link [here](#) to view samples of AL, AR, FL, GA, KY, MS and TN health certificates. Nothing but one of these forms will be accepted. This is required by law and also protects everyone involved the person sending the dog, ourselves and the adopter or receiving rescue to help ensure the dog is healthy and up to date on shots.

TWO WEEK QUARRANTINE

Every dog or puppy has to have been away from the shelter/pound/animal control for a minimum of 2 weeks...it can be at a vet's, a kennel or a foster home. We have an average of 50 dogs on every transport, so we cannot risk having dogs that come straight from a shelter/pound/animal control because some do not give shots until the day the dog or puppy leaves the facility and we all know how horrendous some of these places are. Please respect this requirement as we take everyone on their word that the 2 week quarantine has been followed. Remember, it is ultimately for the health and safety of the dog or puppy.

SPAYED / NEUTERED!!!!!!

All dogs and puppies must be spayed or neutered at least 7 days or more prior to boarding the transport. We will not accept dogs/puppies that were 'fixed' the day before transport it is not safe and think how you would feel if you just had major surgery and then got in the car with a bunch of other people for a long road trip to start a new life. Also, we prefer that the stitches have been removed before transport. We have had an incident in the past where the dog tore out her stitches and ate part of her intestine luckily we got to her to the vet quick enough and her surgery and recovery was a complete success, but with a \$1000 vet bill.

AGE

Puppies must be at least 8 weeks old and have had 2 rounds of shots. We prefer puppies to be 10 weeks old, especially if they are small, under 10 lbs, but USDA regulations allows puppies to be transported at 8 weeks.

SHOTS

Every dog or puppy needs a copy of their medical records, along with the interstate health certificate, to accompany the animal on transport and to be up to date on shots, which include...

DA2PPv Canine Distemper, Adenovirus Type 2, Parainfluenza, Parvovirus Vaccine (MLV), also called the 5 way shot.

(Maine requires the Leptospira Bacterin vaccine, which is in the 7 way shot, DA2PPvL) Bordetella (kennel cough vaccine). During the change of seasons it is especially important to have this vaccine give at least 7 days prior to transport.

Negative fecal for worms, coccidia and giardia

Heartworm negative

Rabies (if old enough)

Flea/tick preventative

SPAYED / NEUTERED!!!!!!***PREGNANT DOGS***

We do NOT transport pregnant dogs at any time. Please don't ask us to make an exception, we won't do it.

MEDICATION

We cannot transport a dog or puppy that is on antibiotic medication (which includes Cephalexin, Doxycycline, Albon, Baytril, etc). Meds for a chronic medical condition, such as thyroid medicine, glaucoma, anxiety or seizures, is acceptable. Heartworm and flea/tick prevention is okay too. Dogs or puppies with an upper-respiratory infection, kennel cough, coccidia, giardia, ringworms, sarcoptic mange or any other contagious conditions are not considered healthy and should not be issued a health certificate and therefore cannot travel on our transport.

SPAYED / NEUTERED!!!!!!

ID

Dogs and puppies need to have a collar with legible ID on it. Include the animal's name, the phone# of who it is going to (adopter/foster/rescue) OR the phone# of who it is coming from (adopter/foster/rescue). What seems to work the best and is the least expensive is white athletic tape, written with permanent magic marker. We walk all the dogs with slip leads, so an actually collar is not necessary, though it does help the adopter when picking up the dog to have a collar to attach the leash to.

FEEDING

Please do not feed your dog or puppy at least 6 hours before dropping it off at transport. The animals are fed lightly both Thursday and Friday evenings, so they will have food during transport.

PERSONAL BELONGINGS

Due to the number of animals we transport, we cannot take any size bags of food to the new adopters. Please just let them know what the dog or puppy has been eating, or send a sample that will fit in a small, sandwich size Ziploc bag, which you can include in the envelope with the paperwork. No beds, unless they fit in the crate with the dog or puppy. No bags, boxes, suitcases, etc. unless it fits in a 1 gallon or smaller Ziploc bag with dog's name and adopter's info we are spending a small fortune mailing things that don't get picked up on Saturday. You may send a favorite toy, blanket, bone, or treat as long as it fits in the crate with the dog or puppy.

SPAYED / NEUTERED!!!!!!

As you can see, having each and every animal we transport spayed/neutered is very important to us. We don't want to create the over-population problem we have down here in the south up in the north, especially since it can easily be prevented. We know of numerous vets and clinics we can recommend that will perform pediatric surgeries as young as 6 weeks. Please contact us for more information.